Cinderella: A Cross-Cultural Fairy Tale
How does culture influence fairy tales from storyteller to storyteller?

Grades 3-5 Lesson: Cinderella: A Cross-Cultural Fairy Tale
Grade Band: 3-5
Arts Subject: Fine Arts
Other Subject: Culture, English Language Arts

SUMMARY
In this 3-5 lesson, students will compare and contrast culturally distinct variations of the fairy tale, *Cinderella*, from around the world. Students will explore storytelling traditions, analyze fairy tale story elements, and read up to three different cultural versions of *Cinderella*. Students will also research the cultures represented in the fairy tales and create a visual art piece.

PREPARATION
Learning Objectives
Students will:

- Analyze storytelling traditions.
- Identify fairy tale story elements.
- Compare and contrast culturally different versions of the *Cinderella* Story.
- Research and gather facts about a culture.
- Create a visual art piece telling the story of a culture.
- Present a visual art piece to an audience.

Standards Alignment
National Core Arts Standards
VA:Cr1.1.3a Elaborate on an imaginative idea.
VA:Cr1.1.4a Brainstorm multiple approaches to a creative art or design problem.
VA:Cr1.1.5a Combine ideas to generate an innovative idea for art-making.
VA:Cr1.2.3a Apply knowledge of available resources, tools, and technologies to investigate personal ideas through the art-making process.
VA:Cr1.2.4a Collaboratively set goals and create artwork that is meaningful and has purpose to the makers.
VA:Cr1.2.5a Identify and demonstrate diverse methods of artistic investigation to choose an approach for begin
VA:Cr2.1.3a Create personally satisfying artwork using a variety of artistic processes and materials.
VA:Cr2.1.4a Explore and invent art-making techniques and approaches.
VA:Cr2.1.5a Experiment and develop skills in multiple art-making techniques and approaches through practice.

Common Core State Standards

ELA-LITERACY.W.3.7 Conduct short research projects that build knowledge about a topic.

ELA-LITERACY.W.4.7 Conduct short research projects that build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic.

ELA-LITERACY.W.5.7 Conduct short research projects that use several sources to build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic.

ELA-LITERACY.RI.3.7 Use information gained from illustrations (e.g., maps, photographs) and the words in a text to demonstrate understanding of the text (e.g., where, when, why, and how key events occur).

ELA-LITERACY.RI.4.7 Interpret information presented visually, orally, or quantitatively (e.g., in charts, graphs, diagrams, time lines, animations, or interactive elements on Web pages) and explain how the information contributes to an understanding of the text in which it appears.

ELA-LITERACY.RI.5.7 Draw on information from multiple print or digital sources, demonstrating the ability to locate an answer to a question quickly or to solve a problem efficiently.

ELA-LITERACY.W.3.8 Recall information from experiences or gather information from print and digital sources; take brief notes on sources and sort evidence into provided categories.

ELA-LITERACY.W.4.8 Recall relevant information from experiences or gather relevant information from print and digital sources; take notes and categorize information, and provide a list of sources.

ELA-LITERACY.W.5.8 Recall relevant information from experiences or gather relevant information from print and digital sources; summarize or paraphrase information in notes and finished work, and provide a list of sources.

Recommended Student Materials

Editable Documents: *Before sharing these resources with students, you must first save them to your Google account by opening them, and selecting "Make a copy" from the File menu. Check out Sharing Tips or Instructional Benefits when implementing Google Docs and Google Slides with students.*

- Booklist: *Cinderella* Around the World
- Fairy Tale Story Elements Organizer
- Cross-Cultural Comparison Table
- Culture Research Resources & Organizer
- *Slide: Cinderella*, A Cross-Cultural Visual Art Project
- Cross-Cultural Fairy Tale Rubric

Additional Materials

- Chart paper or an interactive board
- Pencils
- Art materials

Teacher Background

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Teachers should be familiar with fairy tale story elements, the story and theme of *Cinderella*, and cross-cultural *Cinderella* stories. Review the [Booklist: *Cinderella* Around the World](#). It is highly encouraged to familiarize yourself with the plot, language, and cultural elements of the books before sharing them with your students. This lesson can be adapted to K-2 standards with modifications to the research and visual art project portions.

Student Prerequisites
Students should be familiar with a few folktales and the story of *Cinderella*.

Accessibility Notes
Adapt or modify art activities to meet student learning needs. Many of the books selected can be found as a read-aloud on YouTube or other digital book applications.

INSTRUCTION
Engage
1. Ask students to name a few fairy tales they have read. Tell students a fairy tale is a story, most often for children, with magical and imaginary beings in wondrous lands. Fairy tales sometimes include fairies, princes and princesses, giants, elves, and enchantments. In whole group, collaborate with students to generate a list of fairy tales on chart paper or an interactive board. Keep the list as a reference throughout the lesson. If students do not list *Cinderella*, suggest it.

2. Explain to students that the fairy tales we are familiar with today were first told long ago by storytellers. The basic storyline of the fairy tale was passed down through generations. These stories were not written down, so they changed as new people told them. As each story traveled, it changed to reflect the culture and customs of the new tellers. As a result, there are many versions of popular fairy tales throughout the world.

3. Create a simple chart on the board where students can explore the essential components of a fairy tale. Examine the list of fairy tales students generated. *Ask students: What story elements do you recall in the fairy tales you have read? What story elements do these fairy tales have in common?*
    Examples should include:
- An unspecified time and place for the setting ("once upon a time")
- Characters who are either good or evil (kind or cruel)
- The presence of magic (powers, events, beings)
- A happy ending for the good characters
- Justice for the evil characters
- Theme

4. Show students the [Fairy Tale Story Elements Organizer](#), or create one on chart paper or an interactive board. Ask students to identify which story elements are found in each fairy

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tale. For example, does *The Ugly Duckling* have a happy ending? If it does, check it off on the **Fairy Tale Story Elements Organizer**.

5. Have students "turn and talk" to retell their favorite fairy tale. Ask students to brainstorm ways to change a few story elements in the fairy tale to reflect their own time and place. Allow time for students to work in pairs, encouraging them to tell different stories. As an alternative, lead the class in a collective adaptation of the *Cinderella* story.

Build
1. Introduce students to the books from the recommended Booklist: Cinderella Around the World. These books include *Adelita, Anklet for a Princess: A Cinderella Story From India, Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters: An African Tale, Raisel's Riddle, Sumorella, The Golden Sandal, The Irish Cinderlad, The Persian Cinderella, The Rough-Face Girl,* and *Yeh-Shen*. Have students work collaboratively to read and compare up to three versions of *Cinderella*.

2. Once students have read each story, have them compare and contrast the different versions using the Cross-Cultural Comparison Table. Allow time for students to compare their results and discuss the similarities and differences between each story.

3. Tell students they are going to research the cultural background of up to three fairy tales. Have students work independently or in small groups, dividing up a fairy tale between each peer. Explain to students that each fairy tale comes from a different culture and in order to better understand the culture and the country of origin, they will do research.

4. Review the Culture Research Resources & Organizer with students. Allow time for students to research the cultural background of each story. Provide feedback and inquiry support to students during the research process.

Apply
1. Have students select a Cinderella: A Cross-Cultural Visual Art Project to showcase what they learned about the fairy tales culture. Tell students they will use the culture research to inform their artistic choices. Model for students how to turn a detail from their research into visual art. Allow time for students to work on their projects.

2. Discuss with students how the differences in the cultures affected the stories arising from those cultures. Note the differences between the *Cinderella* stories from other cultures and the familiar version(s) of the *Cinderella* story. For example, in "The Rough Face Girl," the *Cinderella* character walks for miles in the wilderness in the clothes she made from nature to see the Invisible Being. *How does this differ from Cinderella at the Prince's ball?*

Reflect

1. Assess students' knowledge of the cross-cultural fairy tales with a presentation. Have students present their visual art pieces to the class, explaining how culture influenced their art. *Ask: What role does culture play in art and storytelling?* Use the [Cross-Cultural Fairy Tale Rubric](#) to evaluate students' work.

Extend

1. Introduce bilingual versions of *Cinderella*, like *Cenicienta*. Stories like *Adelita* are told in Spanish and English increasing access to readers all across the world. *Ask students: In addition to cross-cultural fairy tales, why is it important to have multilingual fairy tales?* Have students brainstorm languages, words, or phrases unique to their culture (you/tú/ya'll, dress/kleid/frock, stepsisters/stief suster/bonus sister).

2. Tell students they are going to write an original, modern-day *Cinderella* story that takes place in their neighborhood, including words or phrases unique to the language(es) spoken in their homes. Have students write the story only up to the point where the evil characters leave the hero or heroine alone at home while they go to a special event. Then have students switch papers with a classmate so that another writer finishes the story.

Credits

Diane Messina, Original Writer
Rebecca Haden, Adaptation
Editor, JoDee Scissors

Works Cited

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